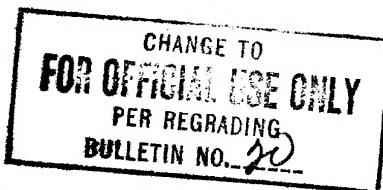


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 FOREIGN DOCUMENTS OR RADIO BROADCASTS CD NO.

COUNTRY Argentina
 SUBJECT PRESS SERVICES AS A MEDIUM OF GOVERNMENT CONTROL OVER BROADCASTING
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A. GOVERNMENT CONTROL OF BROADCASTING

1. Pattern of Control: Argentine radio broadcasting and the country's national press wire services constitute an organic system of news and propaganda dissemination which may be considered as a single unit in defining the nature of the control exercised by the Government. A key to this control may be found in the press wire services which disseminate news and propaganda material under the aegis of the Presidential Undersecretariat of Information and Press. These services constitute the principal sources of material broadcast by Argentine radio stations.

Although there is no evident precensorship of broadcasts, the content of radio voicecasts has been found to be a faithful, often verbatim reproduction of material transmitted by the Argentine wire services. The Government's Radio del Estado and the ostensibly privately owned Argentine stations* feature the same news, with only slight variations, as that carried by the Government's official Morsecast and the private Argentine wire services.

* Although the Government is known to have covertly purchased control of all except one of the so-called private stations, the fiction of an official, nonpolitical radio operating side by side with independent transmitters is still maintained. A series of statements by the Minister of the Interior, in answer to complaints by opposition parties that they were unable to obtain radio time during the recent election campaign, took pains to emphasize that (1) the official Radio del Estado did not broadcast political propaganda but merely gave publicity to the achievements of the Government, and (2) the opposition parties were perfectly free to purchase radio time from the private stations, but the Government could do nothing if those stations did not want to sell the time. The statements were given wide publicity over the radio and by the press wire services. Supporting this concept of the official radio as a nonpolitical organ, Peron broadcast his campaign speeches on a hook-up of all the major "private" stations called "the private network of Argentine radio stations," but not over Radio del Estado.

As an indication, however, of the extent to which Radio del Estado serves as an instrument for the personal aggrandizement of Peron, it may be noted that during the period from 1 to 12 November, when Peron temporarily relinquished his office and Senate President Pro Tempore Alberto Teisaire replaced him in an acting capacity, Radio del Estado failed to broadcast the customary news bulletins detailing the President's daily activities. Instead, the official transmitters carried brief commentaries on previously reported governmental achievements.

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2. Extent of Control: The Government's virtually complete domination over all broadcasting activities under the Peron regime has shown no signs of relaxation. On the contrary, it has become increasingly apparent that through a process of restricting the sources from which radio stations must obtain their news material, the Government has succeeded in removing the last vestiges of what might be termed independent newscasting in Argentina.

The inauguration of operations by the AGENCIA PERIODISTICA ARGENTINA (APA) in August 1951 constituted a major step toward the centralization of news dissemination and the channeling of material to the press and radio through official media. The Morsecasts of the ASOCIACION NOTICIOSA ARGENTINA (ANA) and of TELENOTICIAS AMERICANAS (TELAM) have not been heard for some time, and it may be assumed that they are no longer in operation, their functions very possibly having been absorbed by APA. Radio Splendid, which used to carry TELAM dispatches, and Radio Belgrano now feature national news credited to APA. Radio El Mundo, the third major "independent" station, credits domestic news to the press service of the daily EL MUNDO and to the AGENCIA LATINA DE NOTICIAS.

The discontinuance by Radio Belgrano in October 1951 of the Esso Reporter newscasts, which obtain their material from the UNITED PRESS,* and the apparent elimination of the ASSOCIATED PRESS as a source of foreign news on Radio El Mundo marked a further move toward the suppression of independent reporting on the Argentine radio. The INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE, used as a source of foreign news reports by Radio Belgrano, Radio Splendid, and Radio El Mundo, is now the only U.S. press agency quoted in Argentine broadcasts. In addition to INS, Radio Belgrano and Radio El Mundo use REUTERS dispatches, and Radio Splendid and Radio El Mundo credit some of their foreign news to the AGENCIE FRANCE-PRESSE.

3. Freedom of the Press: Argentine radio broadcasts and press transmissions continue to declare on every occasion that there is complete freedom of the press in Argentina. At the same time, the hostile foreign press and LA NACION, the remaining mouthpiece of the opposition at home, are described as being under the domination of "Wall Street capitalists and imperialists." This theme was especially exploited during the September 1951 meeting of the Inter-American Press Association in Montevideo, which the Argentine delegates and several other Latin American delegations boycotted, charging that the Association was controlled by "capitalist" interests and that it did not really represent the press of the American nations.

Great prominence was given on Argentine voicecasts and wire service transmissions to the Argentine-led split and to the subsequent formation of a Latin American press association which will have its headquarters in Buenos Aires. Prominently featured also was the "Free Press Decalogue" published by the Argentine-led group.

B. NOTES ON INDIVIDUAL PRESS SERVICES

1. The Argentine Government Morsecasts: Two daily transmissions in Spanish Morse, believed to be intended primarily for Argentine diplomatic missions abroad, contain the official version of domestic news, apparently compiled by the Presidential Undersecretariat of Information and Press. National news comprises the bulk of the transmissions, but a number of foreign-dated items--generally reports tending to point up unrest in other countries as contrasted with favorable conditions in Argentina or statements by foreign officials praising Argentina--are also included. The proportion of transmission time devoted to such material appears to have increased somewhat during the past year.

* These programs were discontinued three days after the unsuccessful 28 September revolt against the Peron regime, possibly because of the manner in which Latin American Esso Reporter newscasts handled reports on the uprising. The Esso Reporter generally deemphasized the official Argentine version.

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An AGENCIA LATINA service message in December 1951 referred to these casts as "the transmissions of the Servicio Informativo Radial Argentino, SIRA," indicating that the Argentine Government may have established a press-service counterpart to Radio del Estado's SIRA (Servicio Internacional Radiofonico Argentino) voicecasts for listeners abroad. No mention of a SIRA press service has been heard over the Argentine radio, however, and the official press transmissions, which prior to 1950 were addressed to Argentine diplomatic missions, now specify no recipient or originating office. The pattern and content of the transmissions have undergone no significant change within the past several years.

2. The AGENCIA PERIODISTICA ARGENTINA: This agency now transmits a Spanish-language Morsecast varying in length from six to eight hours. It features complete coverage of Argentine news, including official developments, plus an extensive world-wide coverage. Its foreign items, when not submitted by APA's own correspondents abroad, are credited to INS and the AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE. The language and style of these transmissions are distinguished by an absence of cablese and by apparently painstaking editing. On political and controversial matters, APA faithfully echoes the official Argentine point of view.

3. The AGENCIA LATINA DE NOTICIAS: Prior to 1 January 1952, AGENCIA LATINA's Buenos Aires bureau transmitted three Spanish Morsecasts daily, varying in length from 30 minutes to an hour, featuring official news and reports on political developments reflecting the Peronista viewpoint, as well as lengthy reviews of pro-Peron commentaries appearing in publications abroad. These transmissions were suspended on 1 January for an unspecified period and have not been resumed at this writing. Subscribers were asked to monitor the Argentine Government Morsecasts pending resumption of the service.

The agency, founded by Brazilian newsmen Geraldo Rocha, editor and publisher of the Rio de Janeiro daily O MUNDO, has a bureau in Rio which transmits a daily cast in Spanish and Portuguese Morse. AGENCIA LATINA has a close working arrangement with O MUNDO, which apparently serves as the Brazilian mouthpiece of the Peron regime. The Buenos Aires bureau has frequently sent instructions to editor Rocha requesting him to feature certain stories or to publish commentaries on particular developments in Argentina. Following their appearance in O MUNDO, such commentaries have been transmitted from Buenos Aires under Rio de Janeiro datelines as reviews of O MUNDO articles. Communications from the Rio de Janeiro bureau are generally addressed to editor Dobarro in Buenos Aires.

AGENCIA LATINA serves as a major channel for Argentina's current anti-U.S. propaganda: its transmissions lay particular stress on the "intrigues" fomented by the U.S. and its "capitalist interests" throughout Latin America, echoing the Argentine radio's emphasis on the Latin American, as opposed to the North American, viewpoint. The agency gave extensive coverage to the Montevideo press conference split, carrying lengthy statements by Latin American newsmen denouncing U.S. exploitation of the Inter-American Press Association. It features press comment on the allegedly Wall Street-inspired "anti-Argentine campaign" both abroad and within the country, as exemplified by a story in May, transmitted from Buenos Aires under a Mexico City dateline, according to which a U.S. general had revealed the existence of a plan to have "an army of Latin American troops" occupy Argentina "and other countries which thus far have failed to bow to the will of the United States." A Caracas-dated story in November, also transmitted from Buenos Aires, attributed to A.F. of L. Latin American liaison official Serafino Romualdi the statement that he was spending huge sums in an effort to promote an anti-Peron uprising in Argentina. This report was referred to by Peron in a radio campaign speech on the same day.

Expanding its activities, AGENCIA LATINA opened a bureau in Havana, Cuba, in December 1951. The agency's Paris correspondent now files dispatches to Rio de Janeiro via Havana. Both the Buenos Aires and Rio bureaus address their transmissions to the ANSA news agency in Rome as well as to Latin American recipients.

4. The SAPORITI News Agency: A daily Morsecast in Spanish for ships at sea, lasting approximately 30 minutes, features fairly complete coverage of domestic news highlights, concisely presented. The transmission echoes the official viewpoint.

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